Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A route monitor control system comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a plurality of OAM cell handlers (OCHs);

a plurality of virtual path handlers (VPHs);

a plurality of virtual channel handlers (VCHs);

trunks; and

a control unit ~~which: issues~~ configured to:

issue an OAM (operation and maintenance) cell send instruction to a ~~specific~~ first one of said plurality of OAM cell handlers,

~~controls~~ control said specific OAM cell handler to carry out a loop back control test to at least one of said virtual path ~~handler~~ handlers, at least one of said virtual channel ~~handler~~ handlers, and at least one of said ~~trunk~~ trunks, which are associated with said ~~specific~~ first OAM cell handler, ~~as an object unit~~ in response to said OAM cell send instruction, and

when said ~~specific~~ first OAM cell handler sends out an OAM cell ~~from said specific OAM cell handler to said object unit~~ in response to said OAM cell send instruction, ~~determines~~ determine a fault position based on returning or non-returning of the OAM cell ~~from said object unit~~ to said ~~specific~~ first OAM cell handler.

2. (currently amended) The route monitor control system according to claim 1, wherein said control unit is further configured to:

~~carries~~ carry out a switching operation of a route from at least one of said virtual path ~~handler~~ handlers to at least one of said ~~trunk~~ trunks for fault avoidance based on the ~~determining~~ determined fault position.

3. (original) The route monitor control system according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of OAM cell handlers, said plurality of virtual path handlers, said plurality of virtual channel handlers, said trunks, and said control unit are contained in an ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) switching apparatus.

4. (currently amended) The route monitor control system according to claim 1, wherein said control unit is further configured to:

periodically ~~issues~~ issue said OAM cell send instruction to said ~~specific~~ first OAM cell handler.

5. (currently amended) The route monitor control system according to claim 1, wherein said control unit is configured to:

~~controls said specific OAM cell handler to carry out said loop back control to all of said virtual path handler (VPH), said virtual channel handler (VCH), and said trunk, which are associated with said specific OAM cell handler, as said object units in response to said OAM cell send instruction, and when said specific OAM cell handler sends out said OAM cells to said object units in response to said OAM cell send instruction,~~

~~determines~~ <u>determine</u> the fault position based on returning or non-returning of each of the OAM cells ~~from said object unit~~ to said ~~specific~~ <u>first</u> OAM cell handler.

6. (currently amended) The route monitor control system according to claim 1, wherein said control unit ~~carries~~ <u>is configured to:</u>

<u>carry</u> out the issuing operation, the loop back control <u>test</u> and the determining operation while changing said ~~specific~~ <u>first</u> OAM cell handler among said plurality of OAM cell handlers.

7. (currently amended) A route monitor control method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

[[(a)]] issuing an OAM (operation and maintenance) cell send instruction to a specific one of a plurality of OAM cell handlers ~~(OCHs)~~;

[[(b)]] carrying out a loop back control <u>test</u> to at least one of a <u>plurality of</u> ~~virtual~~ path ~~handler~~ <u>handlers</u> ~~(VPH)~~, <u>at least one of a plurality of</u> ~~virtual~~ channel ~~handler~~ <u>handlers</u> ~~(VCH)~~, and a trunk, which are associated with said specific OAM cell handler, ~~as an object unit~~ in response to said OAM cell send instruction;

[[(c)]] sending out an OAM cell from said specific OAM cell handler ~~to said object unit~~ in response to said OAM cell send instruction; and

[[(d)]] determining a fault position based on returning or non-returning of the OAM cell ~~from said object unit~~ to said specific OAM cell handler.

8. (currently amended) The route monitor control method according to claim 7, further comprising ~~the step of~~:

carrying out a route switching operation for fault avoidance based on the ~~determining~~ determined fault position.

9. (currently amended) The route monitor control method according to claim 7, wherein said ~~object unit is contained~~ carrying out a loop back control test is performed in an ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) switching apparatus.

10. (currently amended) The route monitor control method according to claim 7, wherein said ~~virtual~~ path ~~handler~~ handlers ~~(VPH)~~, said ~~virtual~~ channel ~~handler~~ handlers ~~(VCH)~~, ~~and~~ said trunk, and said specific OAM cell handler are contained in an ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) switching apparatus.

11. (currently amended) The route monitor control method according to claim 7, wherein said [[(a)]] issuing ~~step~~ comprises ~~the step of~~:

periodically issuing said OAM cell send instruction to said specific OAM cell handler.

12. (currently amended) The route monitor control method according to claim 7, wherein said [[(b)]] carrying out ~~step~~ comprises ~~the step of~~:

carrying out said loop back control ~~test~~ <u>test</u> to all of said ~~virtual~~ path ~~handler (VPH)~~ <u>handlers</u>, said ~~virtual~~ channel ~~handler (VCH)~~ <u>handlers</u>, and said trunk ~~as said object units~~ in response to said OAM cell send instruction, and

said [[(c)]] sending out ~~step~~ comprises ~~the step of~~:

sending out ~~said~~ OAM cells from said specific OAM cell handler ~~to said object units~~ in response to said OAM cell send instruction.

13. (new) A system, comprising:

a plurality of testing devices;

a plurality of path handlers;

a plurality of channel handlers;

a plurality of trunks; and

a control unit configured to:

issue an instruction to a first one of the plurality of testing devices, the instruction indicating that the first testing device is to perform a loopback control test,

wherein the first testing device is configured to:

receive the instruction,

send test data to at least one of the path handlers, channel handlers or trunks in response to the instruction,

receive back at least some of the test data, and

forward results of the loopback control test to the control unit,

wherein the control unit is further configured to:

identify a fault based on the forwarded results.

14. (new) The system of claim 13, wherein the control unit is configured to periodically issue the instruction to the first testing device.

15. (new) The system of claim 13, wherein when forwarding results, the first testing device is configured to:

forward information to the control unit based on return of the test data to the first testing device.

16. (new) The system of claim 15, wherein when identifying a fault, the control unit is configured to identify the fault based on the forwarded information.

17. (new) The system of claim 13, wherein the control unit is further configured to:

perform a fault avoidance operation based on the identified fault.

18. (new) The route monitor control system of claim 13, wherein the control unit is configured to forward loopback control test initiation instructions to the plurality of the testing devices.

19. (new) The system of claim 13, wherein the plurality of testing devices may be included in the plurality of path handlers, the plurality of channel handlers or the plurality of trunks.